

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes

September 6, 2005

The Edgefield County Council held its regular meeting at 6:00 P. M. on Tuesday, September 6, 2005, in the County Council Chambers, 225 Jeter Street, Edgefield. Council also held the public hearings indicated below.

Members present

C. Monroe Kneece, Chairman
Willie C. Bright, Vice Chairman
Norman Dorn, Councilman
Joel D. Hudson, Councilman
B. Everette Kitchens, Councilman

Others present

Wayne Adams, County Administrator
John F. Byrd, Jr., County Attorney
Barbara R. Stark, Clerk to Council
and others, as per list attached

The Chairman called the meeting to order and Councilman Hudson gave the invocation, after which all recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

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The August 9, 2005, Edgefield County Council Minutes were unanimously approved, as presented, by a motion made by Councilman Kitchens, seconded by Councilman Bright.

Reports

Council issued no comments on the reports presented.

Public Hearings

Council conducted public hearings at this time to receive written and/or oral comments from the public concerning the ordinances indicated below. No one from the public had any questions; neither did they offer written comments received.

Ordinance No. 04-05-565, "An Ordinance Amending Section III (a)(5)(b) of Ordinance No. 04-05-560 (General Operating Budget Ordinance) to Clarify that Retiree Health Insurance Coverage Provided for therein Shall Extend until Qualification for the Federal Medicare Program."

Ordinance No. 05-06-568, "An Ordinance Amending Title 51 of the Edgefield County Code of Ordinances to Provide for the Administration and Collection of Solid Waste User Charges."

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Ordinance No. 05-06-569, “An Ordinance Authorizing Edgefield County, SC, to Enter into a Lease Purchase Transaction Relating to the Financing of Heavy Equipment; Authorizing the Execution and Delivery of an Equipment Lease Purchase Agreement in an Amount Not to Exceed \$750,000; and Other Matters Relating Thereto.

Ordinance No. 05-06-570, “An Ordinance Authorizing Certain Amendments to the Fee in Lieu of Tax Agreement Among Edgefield County, VF Playwear, Inc. and the Related Landlord to Provide for an Annual Infrastructure Credit Against Fee in Lieu of Tax Payments and an Extension of the Investment Period; Consenting to the Assignment by VF Playwear, Inc. and Said Landlord to Urban Outfitters, Inc., and Bor Unit Investors, LLC of Their Interests in Said Fee in Lieu of Tax Agreement; and Other Matters Relating Thereto.”

ORDINANCES

Motion was made by Councilman Hudson, seconded by Councilman Kitchens, to approve third reading of Ordinance No. 04-05-565, “An Ordinance Amending Section III (a)(5)(b) of Ordinance No. 04-05-560 (General Operating Budget Ordinance) to Clarify that Retiree Health Insurance Coverage Provided for therein Shall Extend Until Qualification for the Federal Medicare Program.” Motion carried unanimously

Councilman Bright made the motion to approve second reading of Ordinance No. 05-06-568, “An Ordinance Amending Title 51 of the Edgefield County Code of Ordinances to Provide for the Administration and Collection of Solid Waste User Charges.” Councilman Kitchens seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Councilman Kitchens made the motion to approve second reading of Ordinance No. 05-06-569, “An Ordinance Authorizing Edgefield County, SC, to Enter into a Lease Purchase Transaction Relating to the Financing of Heavy Equipment; Authorizing the Execution and Delivery of an Equipment Lease Purchase Agreement in an Amount Not to Exceed \$750,000; and Other Matters Relating Thereto.” Councilman Hudson seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Councilman Bright, seconded by Councilman Kitchens, to approve second reading of Ordinance No. 05-06-570, “An Ordinance Authorizing Certain Amendments to the Fee in Lieu of Tax Agreement Among Edgefield County, VF Playwear, Inc. and the Related Landlord to Provide for an Annual Infrastructure Credit Against Fee in Lieu of Tax Payments and an Extension of the Investment Period; Consenting to the Assignment by VF Playwear, Inc. and Said Landlord to Urban Outfitters, Inc., and Bor Unit Investors, LLC of Their Interests in Said Fee in Lieu of Tax Agreement; and Other Matters Relating Thereto.” Motion carried unanimously.

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New Business

At this time, the Chairman recognized Mr. Wayne Miller with the Edgefield Baptist Association concerning the housing of evacuees from Hurricane Katrina. Mr. Stacey Coleman also addressed council on this matter. The Association would like to establish a shelter in Edgefield County. The old Manor House assisted living facility is one possibility they are looking at. It has everything that is required for a shelter. The owner is asking approximately \$5,000.00 per month in rent. Mr. Miller felt that maybe the council would have an influence on the owner's decision as to whether he would permit use of the facility for this purpose. One family of evacuees was currently in the Antioch section of the county. The association has already received other commitments of housing space.

Mr. Miller stated he understood that perhaps there are grants available under FEMA and Homeland Security and that council might secure such funding. One councilman asked if an alternate facility had been considered and the answer was "yes – the Edgefield Gym, but there are no shower facilities. In order for the Red Cross to approve a shelter, there have to be bathing facilities, feeding facilities, etc. If this were to go through, Mr. Miller said that he has a list of churches in Edgefield County willing to participate. A Red Cross representative will be at the Antioch Baptist Church Saturday morning (Sept. 10th) to give a certification class for volunteers, who would afterwards be able to operate a shelter under the rules of the Red Cross.

Mr. Kneece suggested a potential site, that being the Johnston National Guard Armory. It has been donated to the Town of Johnston, is a good size place, and has rest rooms. The Chairman was not certain about the availability of showers.

The question Wayne Miller had for council "Is there any possibility that council could look into a FEMA grant or a Homeland Security grant that would pay the building owner's charges for that length of time?" Mr. Miller said when he spoke with the owner prior to the meeting the owner told him it was costing him between \$5,000 and \$6,000 a month to keep the facility, and he is paying that out of his pocket. Maybe if the right person talked with him he could possibly come down some.

The Red Cross has told the Association that if they had the right facility that their insurance would cover it if they approve the facility. Motion was made by Councilman Kitchens, seconded by Councilman Hudson, to support the Edgefield County Baptist Association in housing Katrina evacuees. Motion carried. Mr. Kneece or Mr. Adams will be in touch with Mike Casey, Emergency Preparedness Director, concerning the availability of a grant to help with this project.

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Stacey Coleman stated to council the Red Cross said as many as 18,000 evacuees were coming to South Carolina. Of those, 2,000 are hospital patients, 6,000 their family members, and an additional 10,000. Most of those will be placed in the Columbia area, and in Charleston, Florence, and Greenville counties. The charitable organizations such as the Red Cross and FEMA are not able to respond adequately. The Baptist Association, along with a number of churches in Edgefield County, hopes that we will be able to provide some shelter if it becomes available. Of course, should this come to pass consideration will have to be given to educational, medical, and other basic needs.

Board appointment

GLEAMNS Human Resources Commission asked Council for its consideration in reappointing Mr. Willie Bright to its board of directors, representing the public sector of Edgefield County. Mr. Bright's previous two-year term on this board expired at the end of August. Councilman Kitchens made a motion, seconded by Councilman Hudson, to appoint Mr. Bright to the GLEAMNS Human Resources Commission Board for a new two year term. Motion carried unanimously.

John's Road

Mr. Bettis Rainsford addressed council on the possibility of closing John's Road, a county road. This road is located off Sweetwater Road approximately six to eight miles south of the Town of Edgefield. This road joins property that Mt. Vintage can purchase to construct another golf course. There would be 300 lots available for construction of homes. Without any improvements to any of the 300 lots, it is anticipated that the lots would generate at least \$600,000 in additional annual income for the county. A petition to close the road, signed by all of the adjoining property owners, was presented to each councilman.

Although the county generally does not close county roads any longer, the council does have to give its position when someone petitions the court to have it closed. The intent of closing this road was advertised three consecutive weeks in a local paper, and the adjoining property owners have been contacted. County Attorney Byrd explained to council that he has discussed this case with the counsel for the petitioners since the last meeting. The petitioners will bring the action to close the road to court. For the county to file an Answer or response, we will have to have the approval from council. Chairman Kneece made the motion that council has no objection to the closing of John's Road. Councilman Kitchens seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

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State Road 453

The SC DOT would like the county to take a portion of Road 453 that goes to Mt. Pleasant Church off Steeple Road, and then the Church would ask the county to abandon it to their ownership. Mr. Lewis Jackson from the Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church explained that this road goes around the church. In 1984, the church constructed a fellowship hall on the back of the church and in the road right of way at the back of the church. DOT now wants to remove from its system 126 ft. of that road where the fellowship hall sits. Mr. Jackson stated that they have no problem with that. Mr. Jackson's concern is that the church's cemetery is behind that road, and the DOT wants to put up "Road Closed" signs there, which would prevent people getting to the cemetery.

The chairman suggested this request be postponed until the next meeting and asked the administrator to get more information before a decision is made.

IT services.

Four companies submitted proposals for IT services and support for Edgefield County Government offices:

Pronet Profesional	\$58 p/hr. – 300 hrs.
Smith Data	\$85 p/hr. – 150 hrs.
A3 Communications	\$1200 p/month
Simple PC	\$70 p/hr. – 300 hrs.

Pronet is the present provider for the county, offered the lowest price, and was ranked highest by the evaluation committee. The administrator gave a report on each firm. A3 Communications gave a \$1200 a month bid as an "estimated amount." Their rate sheet stated that anything between 100 hours and 500 hours would be \$95 per hour, which was well above the lower-priced proposal by Pronet of \$58 per hour. Pronet offered an alternative proposal for \$1,450 per month, or \$17,400 per year, with an absolute guaranteed of unlimited hours, and they were the only company to offer that. Smith Data also offered an estimated cost per year like A3 Communications, but they did not guarantee. Mr. Adams replied to Councilman Hudson's question about the service the county has received from Pronet, stating in his opinion the service has been good and felt the various departments had been very pleased with the service. We see them on an average of about six hours a week. If we do the \$1,450 per month with Pronet we are assured that if we go over there will be no extra charge. At \$58 per hour, it is approximately the same cost as the unlimited-hours proposal. Smith Data charges \$85 per hour; over 150 hours, the charge is \$115 per hour. Councilman Hudson said it seems Pronet appears to be the better price. The recommendation by the administrator was to go with the alternate proposal of unlimited hours, since he could only see IT needs growing, not shrinking, and that protects us. Last year the County used 285 hours, which cost about \$16,500. Councilman Kitchens made the motion to award Pronet the contract on

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unlimited hours as long as it corresponds with the 300 hour cost. Councilman Bright seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Dump Trucks

The County received two bids for the purchase of two dump trucks:

Volvo and GMC Truck Center	\$205,145.20
Shealy Truck Center (Mack Trucks)	\$188,969.98

Motion was made by Councilman Bright, seconded by Councilman Kitchens, to purchase two dump trucks from Shealy Truck Center for a total of \$188, 969.98 (\$94,484.99 each). The motion carried unanimously.

County Vehicles

Some employees of the roads and bridges department are presently driving county vehicles home on a daily basis. Councilman Kitchens suggested taking a closer look at the liability of this. Also, he understood it was not doing any good by letting them drive them home – not saving any money, maybe costing us. (Councilman Kitchens addressed that question to Howard Gibson, Director of Building and Planning.)

Mr. Gibson said he thought the argument is that the employees were still having to go out in the mornings to move the trucks and still having to get the fuel because we do not have the other trucks to deal with that. On the other hand, that only happens in the mornings – but we are picking up forty five (45) minutes to an hour every day because they are not coming back to the shop in the afternoons, they are going home. Right now, it is an imposition because we are short one vehicle, but when the new truck comes we will put a tank on that truck, which solve the problem. If we need fuel in a vehicle, we have to pull a motor grader driver to bring fuel.

They also are coming to the shop in the mornings to change the filters. This time of year it would be good to change twice a day because of the dust. That is how we get good life on our equipment – changing the filters on a regular basis. There will be extra filters with the new equipment that will eliminate some of the trips back to the shop.

Councilman Hudson asked about the insurance coverage on the vehicles. Mr. Adams said they will still be covered. The Association's Property and Liability Trust has to make the payments when all of these wreck claims come in. The safer you are the better off they are. Essentially, if an employee is driving fewer miles in a vehicle in any given week they reason there is less exposure.

In the Association of Counties letter to the county they state many "ifs" of what could happen should the employee decide to use the county vehicle that is in their possession.

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The administrator stated that using the vehicles for non-business purposes is prohibited; violation of this policy subjects the employee to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

The chairman suggested to postpone this for thirty (30) days and get a better “grip” on it. He asked Mr. Gibson to report on it at the October meeting; Mr. Gibson agreed to try to keep up with the mileage, etc.

Shirts for some county offices

The administrator stated that the assessor’s office has asked from time to time about shirts for identification purposes. There are decals on the cars they drive, but they believe having the shirts would make people feel more comfortable because it serves as a clear form of identification. The other office where that would hold true would be the building department, but they deal mostly with people they know, contractors they are familiar with.

Councilman Kitchens said that when he originally proposed this it was with the understanding that if any employee wanted a county shirt (I think it would be good to have some identification whenever people go to meetings) they would have to buy it. If they need identification out in the field, let’s give them an orange vest. So, you are saying if the employees want the shirts let each one buy their own? Mr. Kitchens said I put that in the form of a motion. Mr. Dorn seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Councilman Dorn spoke briefly on the situation regarding Solicitor Myers’s conviction for driving under the influence in a Lexington County vehicle. He stressed that no one is above the law and that the consequences of breaking the law should apply to all equally.

Bettis Museum request

Not on the agenda was a request from Ms. Willa Lanham, Bettis Academy Heritage Corridor, concerning the opening ceremony of the Biddle Hall Museum, and then a walk-through of the museum. Ms. Lanham asked if the county would again lend support for the event as the county did previously. Motion was made by Councilman Kitchens, seconded by Councilman Hudson. Motion carried unanimously.

Rick Green, Upper Savannah COG, had nothing to report.

No guests.

No executive session.

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Claims approved as follows:

A.	PAYROLL	8/1/05 thru 8/14/05
	Regular.....	\$181,674.54
	PAYROLL	8/15/05 thru 8/28/05
	Regular.....	\$186,070.98
B.	General Operating.....	\$629,031.78

There being no further business, Chairman Kneece made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Dorn. Motion carried unanimously. The next regular meeting of council is scheduled for Tuesday, October 4, 2005.

C. Monroe Kneece, Chairman

Willie C. Bright, Vice Chairman

Norman Dorn, Councilman

Joel D. Hudson, Councilman

B. Everette Kitchens, Council

ATTEST

Barbara R. Stark, Clerk to Council

